

# STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Corning Tower

The Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza

Albany, New York 12237

Antonia C. Novello, M.D., M.P.H., Dr.P.H.  
*Commissioner*

Dennis P. Whalen  
*Executive Deputy Commissioner*

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**To:** Hospitals, Providers, Local Health Departments  
**From:** New York State Department of Health Bureau of Communicable Disease Control

## **HEALTH ADVISORY: MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS VACCINE SHORTAGE**

**Please distribute immediately to Infection Control Practitioner, Medical Staff, Infectious Disease Department, Immunization Staff, and Pharmacy.**

### **SUMMARY**

- The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) has been notified of a temporary shortage of the quadrivalent meningococcal meningitis conjugate vaccine (MCV4) known as Menactra®.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a recommendation to defer the routine vaccination of 11-12 year olds until supply improves. CDC recommends that providers continue to vaccinate adolescents at high school entry who have not previously received MCV4, first-year college students living in dormitories, and others at risk for meningococcal disease.
- New York State Public Health Law (NYS PHL) §2167 mandates that students or parents of children less than 18 years of age who attend New York State (NYS) colleges, universities, overnight summer camps and residential schools receive information regarding the meningococcal meningitis vaccine. The law does not require vaccination against meningococcal meningitis.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Due to this summer's exceptionally high demand for the quadrivalent meningococcal meningitis conjugate vaccine Menactra® (MCV4), the CDC -- in conjunction with the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), American College Health Association (ACHA), and Society for Adolescent Medicine (SAM) -- recommends that routine vaccination of 11-12 year olds with MCV4 should be deferred until the supply improves.

NYS PHL §2167 does not require that children be vaccinated against meningococcal meningitis to attend overnight summer camps of greater than 7 days or residential schools. Most children attending overnight camps, including healthy 11-12 year olds, are not considered at greater risk of meningococcal disease than the general population. However, NYS PHL §2167 does mandate

that parents of children attending overnight summer camps and residential schools receive information regarding MCV4. In addition, parents are required to complete a meningococcal response form indicating that MCV4 was received, unable to be received due to the shortage, or refused. Attached is a revised sample meningococcal response form with the option for deferral of vaccination due to the vaccine supply shortage.

Providers should continue to vaccinate adolescents at high school entry and first-year college students living in dormitories because studies have indicated this group is at a slightly greater risk of contracting meningococcal disease. Other persons at high risk for meningococcal disease (i.e., military recruits, travelers to areas in which meningococcal disease is hyperendemic or epidemic, microbiologists who are routinely exposed to isolates of *Neisseria meningitidis*, persons with anatomic or functional asplenia, and persons with terminal complement deficiency) should also be vaccinated.

Until the supply of MCV4 is sufficient, providers are strongly encouraged to:

1. Defer the routine vaccination of 11-12 year olds during the routine pre-adolescent visit.
2. Defer the routine vaccination of children attending summer camps and residential schools in NYS, unless a specific risk factor exists.
3. Track those children, including the 11-12 year olds, in whom vaccination was deferred so providers can recall them for vaccination as vaccine availability increases.
4. Continue to vaccinate all individuals at increased risk of meningococcal disease, adolescents at high school entry who have not previously received MCV4, and first year college students living in dormitories.
5. For children attending NYS summer camps, camps and providers may use the attached revised sample meningococcal response form with the option for deferral of vaccination due to the vaccine supply shortage.

The meningococcal polysaccharide vaccine continues to be available in limited supply, and should only be used for those children aged 2 to 10 years who are at increased risk of meningococcal infection.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

For additional information, please call your local health department or the NYSDOH Immunization Program at 518-473-4437. More information can also be obtained at the CDC's National Immunization Program website at [www.cdc.gov/NIP](http://www.cdc.gov/NIP).